

SB 110
Crime Prevention Program

SENATE JUDICIARY
EXHIBIT NO. 2
DATE 1/18/13
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Some of you have seen this bill before. In the last session it passed this Committee, and was approved by the Senate by a whopping 38-11. Due to misunderstanding about its purpose, it stalled in the House.

1. Crime Prevention efforts have been proven to be extremely effective at reducing crime, and its associated cost to the people of Montana.
2. But Crime Prevention today is mostly done by VOLUNTEERS, that struggle with very little funding. This Crime Prevention bill is about much more than just starting as Neighborhood Watch program, or using McGruff the Crime Dog to teach early awareness to your grandchildren.
3. Crime is easy to ignore....until it is YOUR neighborhood, or YOUR car, or YOUR daughter. (Then suddenly you stand up and scream that "Somebody needs to do something!") Well, those "somebodies" are here today. You are likely to hear some heart-wrenching stories today...but you will also be uplifted by the work of our local hometown heroes...that need your help.
4. Compounding the problem, today we have new KINDS of Crime in Montana....that our volunteers and our law enforcement are not equipped to deal with. (New sophisticated kinds of Gang threats, new Drug Challenges like synthetic Marijuana, and prescription drug abuse, child trafficking, elder abuse, cyber crime, and other kinds of crime that we have never faced before, and are not equipped or trained to address.
5. SB 110 is a "USER PAYS" concept. It allows the ones who cause crime to help pay the cost of Crime Prevention. This \$10 dollar surcharge on criminals to help fund crime prevention activities and will be assessed only on the individuals who commit crimes.
6. Criminals pay a \$10 surcharge when they are convicted, to help provide a funding source that the existing Board of Crime Control will be able to use to direct targeted grant funding to organizations and local governments that need it
7. This will not raise taxes, nor add a single employee to State Government. It simply collects an additional \$10 in the same fashion that a convicted criminal now pays a surcharge of \$10 for Court Information Technology, or the Montana Law Enforcement Academy.
8. Local groups are very good at leveraging this kind of money to get tremendous bang for the buck, with cost-effective volunteer work against crime.

Opponents:

Last year the bill had only one Opponent, the Montana Magistrates Association. I expect you will hear these Justices of the Peace oppose the bill again this year. If you ask them they will tell you that they do not question the benefits of this proposal, but their policy is to simply oppose any new surcharges for any reason. That's fair. I get that. I am also opposed to new surcharges....UNLESS those surcharges are directed specifically to the user who benefits, or in this case who created the need.

Some may say that Crime Prevention should be paid by the taxpayers from the General Fund. Well, eventually, much of the cost of crime does fall back on the taxpayers. But I say, why raise taxes on the people who are being victimized by crime, when here is a perfectly good way to let the Criminal help pay for a little bit of the cost of Crime Prevention.

This concept of the criminal paying a surcharge when they are sentence, is used a lot, for many different purposes. Opponents say there are too many such charges in some local communities. That has some validity. Local fines and fees can be different in every jurisdiction. We are not dealing with those local fees here today. Today we are talking about statewide surcharges in Montana code. There are three, that total about \$35 to 85, depending on if DUI is involved.

Ladies and Gentlemen, you can no longer ignore the New Crime that is now impacting our state.

Listen closely to those who have come clear across the state to tell you about this challenge. Many of them are the unpaid Volunteers on the front lines of Crime Prevention in YOUR towns. They are not asking to be paid. They are not even asking for any taxpayer dollars. They just need a little help. Listen closely to what they are up against.

When we get to the question period, ASK THEM:

- Does Crime Prevention really work?
- What kinds of Crime are you working with today?
- How bad do you really need this help?

This bill allows **Convicted Criminals Contributing to Crime Prevention**

Crime Prevention is best practiced at the local level, and best paid for by those that created the problem in the first place.

Now I will sit, and let you hear some of Montana's Crime Fighters who are on the front lines of Crime Prevention!